

[Mrs. Wm. Trace]

Typed [?] S241 - LA DUP

FORM A Circumstances of Interview

NAME OF WORKER George Hartman ADDRESS 2438 N. Lincoln, Nebr.

DATE November 29, 1938 SUBJECT Folklore

1. Name and address of informant Mrs Wm. Trace 405 N. 25th, Northwest corner

2. Date and time of interview 9 to 12 morning, Nov. 29-'38

3. Place of Interview 25th and R Sts.

4. Name and address of person, if any, who put you in touch with informant None

5. Name and address of person, if any, accompanying you

None

6. Description of room, house, surroundings, etc.

Lives in apartment that her daughter owns. Very nicely furnished. C15 - 2/27/41 -
Nebraska

FORM B Personal History of Informant

NAME OF WORKER George Hartman ADDRESS 2438 W. Lincoln

DATE November 29, 1938 SUBJECT Folklore

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NAME AND ADDRESS INFORMANT Mrs. Wm. Trace, 405 No. 25th

1. Ancestry English
2. Place and date of birth Mount Vernon, Ohio, 1850
3. Family 6 children
4. Place and date of birth
5. Education, with dates Early time education — Primary, grade schools.
6. Occupations and accomplishments, with dates Housewife. Husband, minister.
7. Special skills and interests Homelife
8. Community and religious activities United Brethren Church
9. Description of informant White haired, stout, walks with cane. In remarkably good health for her age.
10. Other points gained in interview

The experience of a Pioneer Family of [?]

FORM C Text of Interview (Unedited)

In the spring of 1862 the family of William H. Lane decided to leave their home in Mt. Vernon, Ohio, and seek their future in what was then the far west, the territory of Nebraska. Mr. Lane and his son, James K. Lane, then a lad of 14 years, drove through with a team and wagon, putting in many weeks on the long trail.

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Reaching Nebraska City in May, and after visiting a few weeks with old neighbors from Mt. Vernon who had preceded them by a few years, they pushed on west and preempted on a quarter section of land in what became Saline county. The Indians were so plentiful, as were the rattlesnakes and buffaloes, that it was impossible to live on the land at that time. So they returned to Nebraska City where they were joined in the fall by Mrs. Lane and her three other children, Sarah, Louise, and Charley who made the journey by train. The oldest son, William, who had enlisted in the Union Army was on furlough and came as far as Peoria, Illinois with them. He was later wounded in the battle of Chickamauga and captured by the rebels. He was three months in Libby prison, was paroled out and died before reaching home. Single space

The family had the misfortune to lose all of their possessions on this trip. It being war time and everything in a state of chaos, they were unable to trace them. So they landed in Nebraska City without a thing except the clothing they had on and the contents of a small valise. On the day they crossed the Missouri River into Nebraska City, November 6, 1832, Louise Lane was 12 years of age. At that time, 74 years ago, Nebraska City was only a small place and there was no Lincoln, not even a building where it now stands.

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In the spring of 1866 the family moved to their homestead, living in a dugout until some time later when they constructed a small house of stone. At this time there were only five families in a radius of ten miles. Their hopes were all built on the creeks, four dugouts and one house.

On the trip from Nebraska City to their homestead the family was again visited with great disaster. They had started, with a barrel of pork, counting on this to help carry them through several of the hard months they knew were ahead of them. Sarah had the misfortune to spill a quantity of kerosene in the barrel of pork. This was almost a calamity

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as there was no money to buy with and not much to buy if they had the money as their nearest market place was Beatrice.

Mr. Lane had arrived at his homestead with 30 head of cattle and several horses. He put out sod corn which gave all indication of being a wonderful crop, but the grasshoppers took the entire crop. There was an abundance of wild grass, but no way to harvest it. After winter set in with no feed for the stock they commenced to suffer. The horses became so weak from starvation [that?] they were not fit for traveling so Mr. Lane would walk 15 miles to what they called the "Dutch Settlement" and now known as Swanton, pay \$2.00 per bushel for corn and carry a sack full on his shoulder making a thirty mile/ round trip for one sack of [corns?] corn [??]

When spring came, he had three cows and a couple of horses he had managed to winter through.

There were many Indian scares and for months the family kept their things packed in such a way that they could get out at a moment's notice. There were several massacres "up the creek," but the little settlement 3 around Mr. Trace's home was not seriously molested.

The nearest postoffice at that time was Camden. Louise and her sister in law, Rebecca, used to ride their ponies across the plains to Camden for the mail, planning what a chase they would give the Indians should they encounter them.

One could look out over the hills and see dozens of Antelope and Deer grazing. In the fall there was an abundance of wild plums and grapes along the creeks.

To this settlement in the spring of 1866 came William Trace from Butler County, Ohio. He had enlisted in the 110th Voluntary Ohio Infantry, August 11th, 1862 and was mustered out in June 1865. He came by stage coach to St. Joe and from there up the river to Nebraska City. Reaching that city he found the stage coach had been gone 3 hours.

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Rather than wait 3 days for the next stage he walked the distance of 30 miles to old friends from Ohio who lived not far from the Lane homestead. [??]

Later Mr. Trace traded a horse to John Thomas, a settler, for his homestead right on Turkey Creek.

At this time he was running a small saw-mill for Tom Cline. The saw-mill was on Turkey Creek just a short way down the creek from his homestead.

On Aug. 27, 1867 William Trace and Louise Lane were married at the home of her parents by the justice of the peace, Charles Howard. At this time there were no churches, or ministers. The ceremony was to have been performed at an early hour in the evening, but the Justice lost his way and did not arrive until midnight at which time the wedding was solemnized. Theirs, was the second-wedding license issued in Saline County.

They lived with Mrs. Trace's parents until Mr. Trace finished building 4 his little one room house on his homestead. This was built on the bank of Turkey Creek by Mr. Trace with lumber he had sawed at the mill. He also made what furniture they had from lumber he had sawed. Their dishes and what few things they were compelled to have were purchased at Beatrice, the nearest trading point. Their only way of conveyance was an ox team and wagon, so it made a long and tiresome journey. The poorest grade of calico sold for 40 cents per yard and a poor grade of muslin, for 60 cents.

Mr. Lane Gave the ground for the little village of Pleasant Hill and also for the cemetery. Mr. Trace sawed the lumber and built the first building which was a store and postoffice for J. W. Ingalls.

In the little one room cabin on the banks of Turkey Creek their first child was born, a son, William Frederick. He stayed with them only two weeks, and his going seemed only to make the days a little longer and the pioneer life seem a little harder to Louise.

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The Indians were still very plentiful and Louise was still very afraid of them. She would have her husband get up in the night, take his gun and go out and see if there were any around.

There was a grist mill over on blue river where the town of Milford now stands. [One?] day Mrs. Trace took some grain over to have ground. He was detained and it was quite late when he arrived hone to find that his wife had all their furniture piled against the door as a barricade against the Indians. [??]

In the same year of 1869 there came a very bad flood, caused by a cloud-burst farther [up?] Turkey Creek. The settlers had to be taken [out?] from 5 their homes along the creek, some in wagons and others in boats. In the wagon with Mr. and Mrs. Trace were three other families, and when in the deepest of the flood water, one of the horses balked and they had to set there until another horse could be [produced?]. After the flood, Mr. Trace [moved?] his little house from the creek bottom, to the south boundary of his homestead where it still stands. As the years went by Mr. Trace kept building on to this one room until today it is a house of eleven rooms. They went through many privations and hardships of the pioneer days. Two of the outstanding events being the year of the terrible grasshopper scourge and the blizzard. In the terrible storm of '88 many of the pioneers brought their livestock right in the dugouts with them so that they would not get lost and freeze to death. One man got lost in this terrible blizzard and didn't know where he was. [??]

He kept driving and stopping a minutche heard a noise under him. He had stopped on the roof of a neighbor's house. He was driving a wagon with a team of horses. the frozen earth kept the roof from falling in.

In the year of 1870 two United Brethren preachers, Rev. Perry Caldwell and Rev. Lamb came to the settlement and started a series of meetings in the one room house with a "lean to" of Thomas Hathaway five miles up the creek. Mr. and Mrs. Trace attended these

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meetings, sometimes driving the ox team and at other times walking the five miles each way. They were converted at these meetings. Mr. Trace felt the call to preach and obeyed the summons and commenced giving his services in the year 1865. He was in active service for over forty years. He was District Superintendent for 10 years and pastor of many churches in the state.

One time at Pleasant Hill, Nebraska, in a frame jail holding several 6 prisoners, the prisoners set fire to the jail hoping to escape this way. They were all burned to death.

One time Mrs. Trace's father had the only frame building in Swan City, Nebraska. It was quite a thing in those days to have a frame building.

One time as Mr. Trace was working sawing lumber in Swan City he was accosted by two Indians who asked for some tobacco.

Mr. Trace said he had none to give them. One Indian exclaimed: "White man heap big liar, tobacco in his mouth."

The Indians were very filthy in their personal habits. Their death rate was startling high to their ignorance about their health.

One time Mr. Trace had several hogs which died of cholera. The hogs were thrown in the creek where they remained until the following spring when some Indians saw them immediately eating the hogs. [??]

When an Indian squaw was to have a baby she always left camp, winter or summer, having the baby alone in the woods.

One time near Swan City some white men found an Indian squaw out in country woods laying on the ground about to have her baby. The white men picked her up taking her back to the Indian village where they got hay and blankets. The white men took control of the

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little Indian camp telling the other Indians not to leave until the squaw had recovered from the birth of her baby which would be in in about ten days.

A doctor of that time estimated that 90% of the Indians had lung trouble or some other trouble caused by exposure when they were young.

One time a lady was all alone in her dug-out when 3 Indians came up. She reached for her rifle to shoot them but one Indian piped: "Heap no Siouxs, we good Pawnees."

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Mr. Trace and I have had in the past, Indians at our house for a meal. The Indians were usually the Pawnees who were the best Indians to get along with. When eating at our table the Indians would point at an article they wanted saying, "Sug" for sugar.